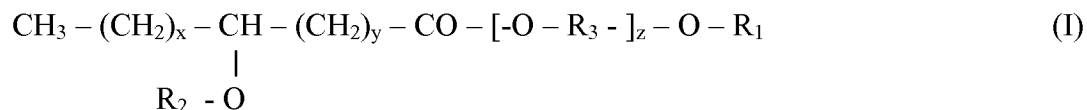


Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Previously presented) A compound of the formula (I)



wherein:

R₁ is H or C₁ – C₄ alkyl;

R₂ is a C₁₄ to C₂₂ acyl, alkyl or alkenyl group, wherein the acyl, alkyl or alkenyl group is linear or branched, and is optionally substituted with one or more substituents independently selected from the group consisting of: halogen, cyano, carboxy, carbamoyl, carbamoyl(C₁-C₄)alkyl, fluoromethyl, difluoromethyl, trifluoromethyl, mercapto, nitro, amino, (C₁-C₄)alkylamino, phenyl, naphthyl, phenoxy, naphthyloxy, (C₁-C₄)alkylthio, and (C₁-C₄)alkylsulfinyl;

R₃ is ethylene, propylene, or branched propylene;

x is 2 – 18;

y is 1 – 17;

the sum of (x + y) is 3 – 19; and

z is 25 – 455.

2. (Previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein R₁ is H or C₁ – C₂ alkyl.

3. (Previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein:

x is 2 – 15;

y is 4 – 17;

and the sum of (x + y) is 6 – 19.

4. (Previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein z is 25 – 228.

5. (Previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein:

R₁ is H or C₁ – C₂ alkyl;

R₂ is a C₁₄ to C₂₂ acyl, alkyl or alkenyl group, wherein the acyl, alkyl or alkenyl group is linear or branched, and is optionally substituted with one or more substituents independently selected from the group consisting of: halogen, cyano, carboxy, carbamoyl, carbamoyl(C₁-C₄)alkyl, fluoromethyl, difluoromethyl, trifluoromethyl, mercapto, nitro, amino, (C₁-C₄)alkylamino, phenyl, naphthyl, phenyloxy, naphthyloxy, (C₁-C₄)alkylthio, and (C₁-C₄)alkylsulfinyl;

R₃ is ethylene, propylene or branched propylene;

x is 2 -15;

y is 4 -17;

the sum of (x + y) is 6 –19; and

z is 25 – 228.

6. (Currently amended) [A] The compound according to claim 1, wherein R₁ is H.

7. (Currently amended) [A] The compound according to claim 1, wherein R₁ is C₁ – C₂ alkyl.

8. (Previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein:

x is 2 –12;

y is 7 -17;

and the sum of (x + y) is 9 –19.

9. (Previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein z is 25 – 57.

10. (Previously presented) The compound according to claim 5, wherein:

R₁ is H or C₁ – C₂ alkyl;

R₂ is a C₁₄ to C₂₂ acyl, alkyl or alkenyl group, wherein the acyl, alkyl or alkenyl group is linear or branched, and is optionally substituted with one or more substituents independently selected from the group consisting of: halogen, cyano, carboxy, carbamoyl, carbamoyl(C₁-C₄)alkyl,

fluoromethyl, difluoromethyl, trifluoromethyl, mercapto, nitro, amino, (C₁-C₄)alkylamino, phenyl, naphthyl, phenyloxy, naphthyloxy, (C₁-C₄)alkylthio, and (C₁-C₄)alkylsulfinyl;

R₃ is ethylene, propylene or branched propylene;

x is 2 -12;

y is 7 -17;

the sum of (x + y) is 9 – 19; and

z is 25 – 57.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously presented) The compound according to claim 1, wherein R₁ is methyl.

14. (Previously presented) A formulation comprising a compound according to claim 1 and a compound requiring solubilization.

15. (Previously presented) The formulation according to claim 14, wherein the compound requiring solubilization has a solubility of less than 33 mg/ml in water.

16. (Previously presented) The formulation according to claim 14, wherein the compound requiring solubilization is a pharmaceutically active compound.

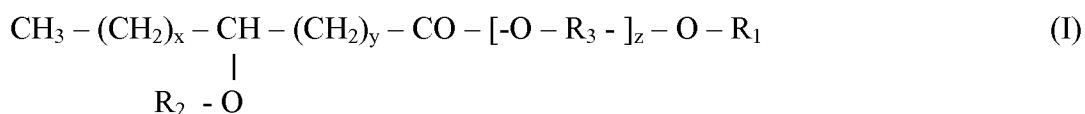
17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently amended) A process for preparing a polyoxyalkylene glycol (POAG) ester, the process comprising reacting a poly(oxyalkylene)glycol chain or a C₁ –C₄ alkyl derivatized poly(oxyalkylene)glycol chain having 25 – 455 repeating monomer units with the carboxylic

acid group of an O-acylated, O-alkylated or O-alkenylated hydroxy fatty acid or C₁ - C₄ alkyl ester in the presence of a hydrolytic enzyme, wherein the enzyme has the capability of catalyzing ester formation between the carboxylic acid group of the hydroxy fatty acid and the ending hydroxyl group of the POAG or POAG-derivative without catalyzing any reaction with an existing ester or ether bond on the O-acyl/alkyl/alkenyl-hydroxy fatty acid or derivative thereof [~~does not catalyze any reaction with a bond connecting any acyl, alkyl or alkenyl group to the hydroxy fatty acid or hydroxy fatty acid-C₁-C₄ alkyl ester~~].

20. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the obtained polyoxyalkylene glycol (POAG) ester has the structure of formula (I)



wherein:

R₁ is H or C₁ - C₄ alkyl;

R₂ is a C₁₄ to C₂₂ acyl, alkyl or alkenyl group, wherein the acyl, alkyl or alkenyl group is linear or branched, and is optionally substituted with one or more substituents independently selected from the group consisting of: halogen, cyano, carboxy, carbamoyl, carbamoyl(C₁-C₄)alkyl, fluoromethyl, difluoromethyl, trifluoromethyl, mercapto, nitro, amino, (C₁-C₄)alkylamino, phenyl, naphthyl, phenoxy, naphthyloxy, (C₁-C₄)alkylthio, and (C₁-C₄)alkylsulfinyl;

R₃ is ethylene, propylene, or branched propylene;

x is 2 - 18;

y is 1 - 17;

the sum of (x + y) is 3 - 19; and

z is 25 - 455.

21. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 20, wherein the process is performed in the absence of an organic solvent.

22. (Previously presented) The process according to claim 20, wherein the hydrolytic enzyme is lipase B from *Candida antarctica*.

23. (Original) The process according to claim 20, wherein the hydrolytic enzyme is immobilized lipase B from *Candida antarctica*.